

**Official publication of Age Concern Wellington**

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**OFFICE HOURS:**

**9.30am - 4.30pm Mon - Fri**

*Autumn 2016*

**Age  
Concern**

Wellington

He Manaakitanga

Kaumātua



***Serving the needs of older people***



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## Executive Officers Report

The Christmas period always sees a spike in the number of calls we receive seeking our help. This year has been no exception. When our office re-opened the phones were busy with callers seeking information and help for themselves or for elderly relatives or friends.

We have also seen a big response to a number of media articles about loneliness amongst old people and the impact of the Accredited Volunteer Visiting Service. Our visiting service co-ordinators have been very busy screening applications from new volunteers who have responded after hearing or seeing one of the news items. We have welcomed the opportunity to spread the word about this large and often unmet need within our community and also appreciate the part we can play in enabling people to give something back to their community through volunteering.

While the season of goodwill is behind us, that goodwill does not extend to those who would trick us into parting with money. In this edition we have further information on scams that have happened and urge you to be alert to and reject requests for money and the associated “sob” stories designed to play on our willingness to trust people.

On a much more positive note we have an article about skin care and some very useful tips to help us.

Happy reading.

*Marion Cowden*  
Executive Officer

## A link between overeating and memory impairment as we age?

*Scientific American* reports that researchers are in the early stages of linking high calorific intake to mild cognitive impairment.

### What is Mild Cognitive Impairment? (MCI)

MCI is the stage between normal age related memory loss and early Alzheimers. For example, in normal age related memory loss, a person might forget where they have put their wallet or keys. In early Alzheimers, a person may repeatedly put things in the wrong place, like the wallet in the freezer, or have no idea what keys are for.

With MCI, a person is not demented; they are functioning well, but if tested, do less well than their age, education and sex-matched peers. The researchers observed that having a daily calorie intake of more than 2,143 was associated with a significant chance of having MCI. If I am consuming more than 2143 calories, my odds of having MCI is twice that of somebody who consumes 1,526 calories a day.

The whole article can be found at [www.scientificamerican.com/article/overeating-memory-loss/](http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/overeating-memory-loss/)

*Sheila Reed*  
EAN Coordinator



## Enjoy summer with Driving Miss Daisy

Welcome to Driving Miss Daisy's first message for 2016. We hope you enjoyed the festive season and are prepared for a busy, interesting year ahead.

The weather has been all over the place this summer, across the country; Mother Nature is showing the attributes of the season to its full potential this year, from balmy blue sky days to tropical thunder storms. We can only hope that farmers prepare accordingly for the droughts forecast in the upcoming months.

One positive of the season is the late summer garden, which has a tranquillity like no other time of the year. It's heartening to see all the hard labour put into the garden over spring and early summer come to fruition, in the form of stunning floral displays and delicious home-grown crops. If you don't have your own garden there are many wonderful public gardens and parks to enjoy, most with easy walking paths and handy seats from which to rest and enjoy the surroundings.

At Driving Miss Daisy, we can help with a lot more than simply driving you to appointments. We love to take our clients out on trips, such as to the park or a garden. Other quintessential summer activities might be enjoying an ice cream at the beach, a glass of wine and a platter to share at a winery, a picnic at a local beauty spot or a visit to the sculpture garden. Many of our clients gather together a friend or two to share the experience – there's always plenty of fun to be had!

Driving Miss Daisy is committed to helping our clients get out and about, so you can live life to the full and enjoy every moment. If you have an activity you'd like us to help with, please call us today to discuss – we look forward to seeing you soon!

**Upper Hutt - Lynda Moore**  
(04) 970 6636 021 177 4968

**Lower Hutt - Andrew Dykes**  
(04) 568 2254 027 280 0668

**Mana-Porirua - Jo Rangiwai**  
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## No More Sweet Treats for the Grandchildren!

Traditionally, grandparents have been able to indulge the grandchildren with sweet treats, chocolate, ice cream, cakes, biscuits – all the things we know they love. It's been quite the mark of a successful day to return the little angels to their parents in a sticky state.

Alas, we may have to change the way we do things in the light of the childhood obesity epidemic and this age of excess! What was once a treat to us is now an everyday thing for our mokopuna, often in ridiculously large size portions, and we are damaging their health, present and future, with our over indulgent spoiling.

I mentioned to a friend of mine that I have already changed the contents of my bag of snacks when I take the grandchildren out. There are crackers, fruit and carrot sticks but no lollies, and the bag of lollies in the glove box is no more. No more bribery to get them to sit in the car seat so I can strap them in! As she is part of the Healthy Future Families Trust\* this was music to her ears.

The HFF Trust strongly encourages parents and grandparents to think of healthy non food rewards or treats, like your undivided attention and listening or reading a story. Or if it going to be a food treat, then make it a healthy food treat. What kind of a treat is it if we give small children things that will contribute to health problems in later life?

The grand-parenting role is something most of us thoroughly enjoy, but it does come with responsibilities as well. So let's be good role models and help to give them the very best start in life!

*Sheila Reed*

EAN Coordinator and Grandmother of four

*\*The Healthy Future Families Trust is an independent trust of health professionals and other concerned people, founded by a dentist and by diabetes nurses. Their main focus is preventing obesity and Type 2 diabetes in children by working with other like-minded community organisations to promote healthy*

*eating and physical activity in children, families and communities.*

*They are putting the finishing touches to their website but in the meantime you can google Healthy Future Families trust and read their Facebook entries. You'll find all sorts of interesting ideas and information.*



*Sheila Reed with her Grandchildren Quinn and Lorelei.*

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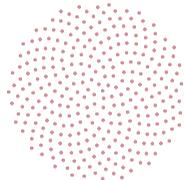


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Serving the needs of older people

# WELLEIDER WORKS



## Is life more challenging as you age?



### Counselling can help

Counselling provides an opportunity to talk about all sorts of things which may be worrying you, big or small. We all face challenges as we age and whatever we experience – the loss of friends or family, where we live, coping with the daily demands of life, anxiety, and depression – can all be brought to counselling.

It is natural to feel nervous about contemplating counselling for the first time, but talking with a counsellor can leave you feeling listened to, less burdened and clearer about living in accordance with your priorities.

Knowing what to expect can help you feel more prepared. You may like to explore our website ([www.welleider.co.nz](http://www.welleider.co.nz)) which includes comments from clients and profiles of staff. To get the most out of your session, it may be helpful to write things down in advance, so that you remember the things you most want to talk about.

If you are not sure where to start, your counsellor is an experienced professional, who will support you to start exploring. In your first session, your counsellor will:

- Go over the information you have been sent about counselling at WellElder, including discussing confidentiality, session length and making a contribution towards costs.
- Begin to understand your concerns. WellElder counsellors do this partly by asking you to indicate how you have been feeling over the past week and how your relationships are with others. If you have been referred by your medical centre or a community agency, they may investigate this with you.

- Decide with you with where the focus of your counselling will be, based on your story. This does not need to be rigid or fixed, and you and your counsellor can revise this as you proceed. The aim is for you to start to feel safe and confident discussing whatever is important to you, whether it be exploring thoughts or feelings in more depth, or changing something in your life.
- Get some feedback from you about what has been helpful or unhelpful during the session. The first session includes the opportunity to decide whether there is a good fit between you and the counsellor, in order to do the work you want. You can decide whether you would like to continue with further sessions, or perhaps change to a counsellor with a different approach.

Older people are used to getting on with life themselves, but many clients tell us that they are surprised to find their counsellor so easy to talk to. Counselling is about building a trusting relationship with someone who will not judge or criticise, so that you can look at what works for you in life. Counsellors do not usually give advice, but will help you to find your own insights and understandings.

We take it as a sign of strength when people decide to investigate counselling, perhaps for the first time in their lives. For many people, counselling can be helpful in finding a pathway through difficulties.

If you are unsure about whether counselling is for you, have a chat with Pete or Tina at WellElder, and feel free to ask questions.

You can ring us at WellElder on 380 2440, Tuesdays to Thursdays, to make a counselling appointment – and you are likely to see one of our five counsellors within two weeks.

Once you have made an appointment with WellElder, we will send you confirmation details of your counsellor's name and where you will meet. This will be at Newtown, Johnsonville, Porirua or Paraparaumu, or at your own home or Rest Home if mobility is difficult.



Serving the needs of older people

## THE AGE CONCERN WELLINGTON CHARITABLE TRUST

Exists to enhance the wellbeing and interests of older people in the regional district of Age Concern Wellington (Inc), being generally the Wellington, Lower Hutt, Upper Hutt and Porirua territorial areas. The Trust will support provision of advocacy and services to older people in need of assistance and not reasonably addressed through conventional means.

The Trust seeks to create a strong capital base from which it can further its purpose in the short and longer term. This can be achieved through gifts and bequests.

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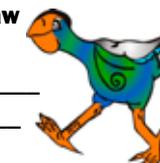
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## Sensational Volunteer Visitors of the Hutt Valley Accredited Visiting Service

There is nothing that deters these two volunteer visitors in the Hutt Valley Accredited Visiting Service (AVS) team. Inspiration plus to us all. Both are living on their own since their husband's passed away over a decade ago and being vision impaired has not held them back.

They walk quite a distance to catch the bus to visit their clients.

Having a recent knee replacement has not held Mary back at all. Mary has 3 clients and what a vast positive difference she has made in their lives. English, born in India as her father was in the British Army. With her husband in the British Royal Army she has lived with her family in Malta, Burma, England and settled in Heretaunga, Upper Hutt. Her family of 3 daughters and 2 sons live in NZ and overseas and she enjoys her lovely grand and great grandchildren.

Grace also is English and after being involved with voluntary work in Christchurch with the Cancer Society and Arthritis NZ, relocated to Silverstream, Upper Hutt and joined our AVS team. Grace has a very long walk to her closest bus stop and says this keeps her fit. She enjoys walking and is one of the lovely voluntary guides at Hutt Hospital.

Both ladies are involved with the Blind Foundation and being very philosophical, think to the future and look forward as life goes on and we at Age Concern AVS appreciate their dedication to the elderly.



Photo left to right – Mary Atkins (AVS volunteer visitor), Melva Howard (Hutt Valley coordinator) Grace Jacques (AVS volunteer visitor).

Taken at Hutt Hospital after Mary and Melva visited a client of Mary's. Grace was on duty at the hospital. Coffees and a cup of tea was enjoyed after the visit as Grace's duties were completed.

"My memory is gone Mildred, so I changed my password to "Incorrect."  
That way when I log in with the wrong password, the computer will tell me...  
"Your password is incorrect."

## Scam Corner

One of the most common scams aimed at people at home is the phone call that usually comes just as you sit down for a meal. "I am ringing from Microsoft Windows to tell you that we have noticed a virus on your computer". Really! How did they know there was a problem? How kind of them to ring me. "What should I do?" The kind person on the phone tells you not to worry, he can fix it for you in a few minutes. Putting your dinner aside while you turn on your computer you are so grateful that the serious problem can soon be fixed.

Following the careful directions from the man from Windows you push this key and that and open up some windows and type in the suggested words. Soon the kind man on the phone tell you that it looks like the problem has been fixed but to leave your computer running for a while and he will run through a few checks. You leave the machine on and go back to your tea that is somewhat colder than it was when the phone rang. You're so grateful that another one of life's problems has been solved.

While you finish your pork chop, carrot and peas the kind man on the phone has been busy. He taken control of your computer; taken the pin numbers you so carefully hid away; stolen your credit card details and just to make matters worse has transferred all your savings into his bank account. Of course you don't discover this until you go to withdraw your Super from the bank next week. You have been robbed!

The lesson? There never was anything wrong with your

computer; the kind man from Windows was a criminal fraudster working for a shady overseas call centre and your trust in this scum bag has cost you your life savings.

So if you don't personally know the caller just excuse yourself, hang up and enjoy your dinner while it's hot.

*Ken Daniels*

Elder Abuse and Neglect Co-ordinator

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**Alive, Alive Oh!  
By Diana Athill.**



I have just finished reading this short book (168 pages) and can thoroughly recommend it.

Diana Athill is approaching 100 years old – she had quite a privileged upbringing, attended Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford University, and then went on to help establish the publishing firm, Andre Deutsch.

She had a somewhat unorthodox lifestyle, never marrying but had a series of lovers. She often said that when unable to sleep, instead of counting sheep she would recall the number of men she went to bed with!

For the past seven years she has become a resident of the Mary Fielding Guild in North London, described as a retirement home for the active elderly. It takes both men and women, and residents pay for their keep, but no one has been asked to leave on account of them running out of money (there is a fund for such situations).

There is an amusing account of her deciding to buy six rose bushes for the garden – six holes had been dug and duly six David Austin roses arrived bare rooted. It was agreed that everyone would help but only three turned up (the others simply forgot, something only too likely to happen in any event in a home for older people). Vera, nearly blind and 94, Pamela also 94 (but who is slim and amazingly nimble for her age) and Diana (nearly 100) = combined age 285 years. Only Pamela could get down on her knees to spread out the rose's roots at the bottom of the hole. Diana sprinkled nourishing rose food and Vera tipped the compost out of a bucket. Pamela needed assistance to get to her feet (no one in this place can get up once down), so she

could tread the plants in. Eventually all six roses were planted but everyone was too exhausted to speak at the end of, but felt very pleased with themselves.

Other chapters are equally enthralling – she described her childhood home Ditchingham Hall, and the wonderful garden which existed not only for ornamental purposes, but also supported the house. A well cultivated walled kitchen garden is beautiful – there was not a single part of it that did not function exactly as it was meant to do.

I loved this book partly because I am the daughter of a market gardener, and grew up in what was once a country house garden – her description is spot on. Also, in his later years my father lived in an Abbeyfield Home, probably based on a similar model to the Mary Fielding Guild. I do wish there was an Abbeyfield Home in Wellington!

This book is available from Wellington City Library - Alive, Alive Oh! By Diana Athill, published by Granta Press (library ref. B ATH).

*Ann Dalziel*  
Community Support Co-Ordinator



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As a long, hot summer draws to a close, I want to touch on a couple of key priorities for National this year: education and healthcare.

Results in New Zealand schools are continuing to improve. For instance, NCEA Level 2 (which was Sixth Form Certificate when we were at school) pass rates last year reached 75.8% – up a full 10 percentage points since National became the Government. Healthcare is an issue of concern to us all – last year my Mum spent time in hospital with back problems and I am pleased to say she got an excellent result from the complicated surgery. The Government will continue to improve access to hospital services, including by funding an increase in elective surgical operations. With this year's increase, the annual volume of elective surgery will have risen by 42% since 2008. The number of hospital specialist assessments has also risen by 110,000 a year and remains a top priority.

On a personal note, I'm delighted I will have the opportunity to introduce my member's bill which provides for RSA clubs to be able to serve alcohol on Anzac Day without needing an additional special licence. Given this is the 100th Anniversary of the RSA, it is an appropriate time to be making things easier for this wonderful organisation that serves our communities so well.

Wishing you a safe autumn,

*Paul Foster-Bell*

List Member of Parliament based in Wellington Central



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For more information or to talk to Andy, simply call free on 0800 222 155 – calls answered 24 hours, 7 days or visit our website: www.simplicity.co.nz

**Skin advice**

It is a very sad fact that nearly everyone over 60 suffers from dry skin which is caused by a lack of natural moisturisers (sebum) in older skins. In addition there are a number of factors responsible such as family history, low thyroid activity, smoking, poor nutrition, environmental issues such as excessive heating or cooling (air conditioning) and excessive bathing.

It is important to keep the skin as supple as possible, as cracks and fissures can open up the skin to infections.

Simple treatment includes reducing the number of times you bathe, perhaps every second day (although body folds can be sponged daily) – a shower is preferable to a bath, and to use lukewarm rather than hot water. The use of soap is discouraged, and it is recommended to use a synthetic cleanser with a pH similar to the skin (5.5). Recommended products are Dove unscented soap (economical), QV Wash, Cetaphil Wash and Aveeno Wash. It is important to be aware that some of these liquid washes make the shower tray quite slippery, so having a nonslip mat in the shower is essential. These liquid soaps are also a bit more expensive, but you don’t need to use a lot.

The next important step is to moisturise as soon as you have finished washing. There are two aspects to this – moisturising adds moisture to the skin, and the use of emollients, which soften the skin. These two are interchangeable, but there is no right moisturiser for ALL people. Dove, Cetaphil, and Aveeno all do good moisturisers but aqueous cream or HealthE cream are all on prescriptions from your doctor, so are cheaper.

Bath oils can be used which leave a thin layer of oil on the skin (be aware these may make the bath very slippery so should be used with caution). Lotions should be applied immediately after bathing to retain water in the skin. Creams are ‘richer’ than lotions, and ointments are for more specific areas and may include pure oil preparations. Try to use a non-perfumed lotion or oil as the fragrance may cause an allergic reaction, for example Aveeno bath oil or pinetarsol, but again great care must be taken with possible slippery bath or shower. The use of a nonslip mat in the bath and on the floor is very important.

Nutritional supplements may also help – Flax Seed oil helps with drying of the skin, 1 – 2 capsules daily, but oily fish is good too.

It is also important to get a little sunshine daily as this increases the Vitamin D in the body. During the summer try to get 15 to 20 minutes, and in winter 30 minutes, but it is best to avoid the times between 10.30am – 3.30pm when the risk of burning is high.

It is worth speaking to your GP if you have concerns about your skin, especially moles and anything that looks unusual. A consultant dermatologist would carry out a total body check to ensure that moles and skin discolourations are just that, and nothing more sinister. Moles that change shape or colour, itchy or bleeding need to be seen as do any sores that don’t heal after about three months.

*Ann Dalziel*  
Community Support Co-Ordinator

With many thanks to Dr Jennifer Pilgrim, Consultant Dermatologist, Bowen Hospital, Wellington for her help and advice.



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you can do it.**

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**Age Concern Wellington, PO Box 11-108, Manners Street, Wellington 6142 or phone (04) 499 6646.**

## Managing your hearing loss – it’s more than just hearing aids

Hearing loss doesn’t automatically mean you need a hearing aid. Your needs will depend on the extent of the loss and how it affects your daily life – this is what a hearing therapist will help work with you on as part of the national free Hearing Therapy Service.

Wellington hearing therapist, Linda Hatten, says it’s important to work with each client on a case-by-case basis to find the best outcome.

“Hearing aids could well be a solution, but there are other things people don’t always think about that can help, like developing good communication strategies

and tactics to cope with your listening environment.”

Linda says it’s important to identify the conditions that make hearing a challenge for you. Once you pin down the things that make hearing difficult, you can come up with strategies to manage your hearing loss.

“I’m going to see someone tomorrow who has trouble hearing the television, but they don’t want to turn the volume up too loud. So I’m going to show them a TV listening headset and talk with them about closed captioning.”

There are lots of strategies you can adopt that will improve everyday situations that are challenging for those who have hearing loss.

“Is talking on the telephone a big problem? Some practical strategies to try are using the speaker

phone, turning the volume up, or changing the tone. Or will using the other ear be better?”

Many people struggle with background sound, like traffic noise while out and about. But there are lots of things around the house that can make hearing difficult too, like the dishwasher and microwave.

“Be aware of what’s going on around you that’s making hearing difficult, and figure out which things you can control to make conversations easier,” says Linda. “Mute the TV during the ad break, or wait until the jug has finished boiling before having a conversation.”

But one of the most successful strategies is to ask other people to help. Educate others about the best ways to communicate with you. Let them know to make sure they have your attention first before speaking. Face-to-face conversation is also important, especially for those who rely on watching lip movements, and encourage clear, slow speech. If you have trouble understanding what’s being said, ask the speaker to rephrase their words, not just repeat them.

“Don’t take on the entire burden yourself,” says Linda. “Communication is two-way.”



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### CARE AT HOME A SENSIBLE CHOICE

Deciding what support you need to access to maintain independence as you age can be challenging. Miranda Smith, owner of New Zealand’s longest running private homecare agency knows how difficult these decisions are.

“Sometimes people in crisis contact us, other times our services are used reactively to help someone recover from illness or injury. Whatever the reason, we believe that accessing the right supports, especially for those living alone, is critical. Peace of mind comes with knowing the right care is in place”.

The daughter of one of the agency’s clients shares her experience when her mother was diagnosed with Alzheimers. “Miranda Smith was reassuring and supportive and I was given the opportunity to meet and interview potential carers. The dignity of my mother and her independence of being able to still live within her own home, despite needing 24 hour care, was possible. Miranda Smith Homecare has the personnel and experience to ensure stress doesn’t become a burden”.



### Dear John.....

Dear John  
I know you would say “don’t do it” but I really do want to help my granddaughter raise the money for her first mortgage. She is only a little bit short of what she needs and I’d love to see her happy in her own home. Do you have any advice for someone who’s about to go against what you’d say?

Dear Dorothy,  
Well yes, I would say “don’t do it” but if you really must, I came across some very useful guidelines the other day\* that might help.

1. Only lend what you can afford to lose. Think about how it will affect you if you never see the money again.
2. Get it in writing. Draft a loan agreement that you both sign.
3. Set out a repayment schedule, but be flexible about the terms. There may be some months

- when a repayment can’t be made in full, but make sure you get something every month.
4. Consider charging a small interest rate. This will be entirely up to you but it’s worth thinking about.
5. Keep track of the balance on a spreadsheet. This could be done on the computer or whatever suits you and should be done by both of you. That way future queries about what’s been repaid can be tracked and easily sorted if there’s a future query.
6. Don’t let money get in the way of your relationship. This will be easier said than done but the financial arrangement needs to be separate from your relationship. And think about whether and what you will tell other family members – it’s important that you’re not seen as a soft touch.

\*How to Lend Money to Family or Friends (If you must) [www.nextavenue.org](http://www.nextavenue.org)

**Please send in any queries you might have and our amazing manager John will reply to these questions and problems, and give an answer drawing on his vast experience working at Age Concern.**

**He can be contacted on 499 6646; emailed on [eo@acwellington.org.nz](mailto:eo@acwellington.org.nz); or written to at PO Box 11-108, Manners St, Wellington 6142.**



**Linda Hatten is a qualified hearing therapist for Life Unlimited Hearing Therapy Services. Life Unlimited are funded by the Ministry of Health to provide free hearing evaluations to New Zealand citizens and permanent residents aged 16 years and over.**

**They can also provide independent information and advice to help you manage your hearing loss and improve your communication skills. They don’t sell hearing aids, but can advise you if they think a hearing aid will be beneficial, and they can refer you to an audiologist or other specialist if required. Call 0800 008 011 to arrange an appointment.**

## Scam Corner

I once knew an elderly woman who at 93 lived alone in her own home. Alice, (not her real name), had always been house proud. She kept her small garden neat and weeded, swept her path most days and always had her washing done by 10 in the morning. (This habit had come from the days when she would stop at that time to listen to the radio serials of "Doctor Paul" & Portia Faces Life".)

Alice was sweeping her path one day when a neatly dressed young man arrived and offered to help her keep her house in order. He said that he had noticed how house proud she was and said that he was able to help her with jobs that she found difficult. In particular he offered to clean her tiled roof of some moss that had grown there and to spray it with a protective coating to keep it looking good for another 20 years. Alice was naturally delighted to receive this offer of help and happily agreed to the work being done.

A week later the man returned dressed in overalls

with a spray pump and hose. He watered and sprayed all day and asked Alice for payment when he finished. She happily wrote a cheque for the young man and retired for the night happy in the knowledge that she had a clean and shiny roof.

It wasn't until her son checked her bank account a fortnight later that he noticed that his mother had paid \$12,000 for the day's roof clean which turned out to be just a simple water spray.

Alice had been scammed. In her desire to accept help she had forgotten the first rule about employing strangers to do unsolicited work. DON'T. Always check with friends or family first. Always get references that you can check and always get written quotes from reputable tradespeople.

*Ken Daniels*

Elder Abuse and Neglect Co-ordinator

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